CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 10 JUNE 1996 FROM THE HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING A STATEMENT ISSUED ON 8 JUNE 1996 BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS CONCERNING NUCLEAR TESTING

I have the honour to transmit to you a statement issued on 8 June 1996 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China concerning nuclear testing.

I would be grateful if the text of this statement could be circulated as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament. Attached please find the Chinese text and the official translations in English, French, Spanish, Russian and Arabic.

(Signed): Sha Zukang
Ambassador
Head of the Delegation of
the People's Republic of China
to the Conference on
Disarmament

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China

China conducted a nuclear test on 8 June 1996.

China stands for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, and is in favour of reaching a comprehensive nuclear test ban in the process towards this objective. As early as in October 1993, the Chinese Government publicly announced that China stands for the conclusion of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty no later than 1996. Since then, the Chinese delegation has taken an active part in the CTBT negations in Geneva. China will continue to work with other countries for the conclusion, within this year, of a fair, reasonable and verifiable treaty with universal adherence and unlimited duration.

The limited amount of nuclear weapons China possesses is solely for the purpose of self-defense and does not constitute a threat to any country. China has unilaterally and solemnly undertaken not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstances. It has also committed itself not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States or nuclear weapon-free zones. At the same time, China strongly calls on other nuclear-weapon States for a positive response to China's initiative by immediately concluding, through negotiations, a treaty on mutual non-first use of nuclear weapons, and reaching an agreement on the unconditional non-use or non-threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States or nuclear weapon-free zones.

In the world today, there still exist huge nuclear arsenals and the threat of a nuclear war caused by the first use of nuclear weapons. Against such a background, for the purpose of safeguarding the supreme interests of the State and the nation, China cannot but conduct the necessary and the minimum number of nuclear tests. We have all along exercised utmost restraint in conducting nuclear tests, and the number of tests we have conducted is extremely limited.

Together with the Governments and peoples of other countries in the world, the Chinese Government and people will work unremittingly and do their utmost for the realization of the lofty goal of a nuclear weapon-free world at an early date and for the maintenance of lasting peace and universal security.

Based on the afore-mentioned position, the Chinese Government hereby announces that before September this year, China will conduct another nuclear test to ensure the safety of its nuclear weapons. After that, China will exercise a moratorium on nuclear testing.